



# State of Connecticut

## Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission

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### Chairperson

Isaías T. Díaz, Esq.

### Vice Chair

Richard A. Cruz

### Secretary

Yolanda Castillo

### Treasurer

Dr. Eugene M. Salorio

### Commissioners:

Ramón L. Arroyo

Hon. Migdalia Castro

Roberto C. Fernandez

Dr. Sonia B. Mañjon

Lourdes E. Montalvo

Norma Rodríguez-Reyes

Danny Torres

### Acting Executive Director

Werner Oyanadel

### Special Projects Director/ Grants Writer

Lucia Goicoechea-Hernández

### Senior Legislative Secretary

Clarisa Cardone

## MINUTES

### LPRAC Regular Commission Meeting

### April 17, 2013

### Legislative Office Building, Hartford, Connecticut

### 5:35 p.m.

Commissioners Present:	Isaías T. Díaz, Esq., Yolanda Castillo, Roberto Fernández, Lourdes Montalvo, Dr. Eugene Salorio and Danny Torres
Commissioners on the phone:	Honorable Migdalia Castro and Norma Rodríguez Reyes
Commissioner absent:	Ramón L. Arroyo, Richard Cruz and Dr. Sonia Mañjon
Staff:	Werner Oyanadel, Acting Executive Director and Clarisa Cardone, Sr. Legislative Secretary

#### Tape 1 A

**Chairman Díaz, Esq.** called the meeting to order and asked **Secretary Commissioner Castillo** to do roll call. Quorum was not established.

**Chairman Díaz, Esq.** asked for 60 seconds of silence in memory of all the Boston bomb victims.

**Commissioner Torres** came in at 5:38 p.m.

**Public Participation:** Mr. Victor Lopez, Jr., President of the Hispanic Coalition of Waterbury attended the LPRAC Board of Commissioners Meeting in Hartford to officially announce everyone in attendance that the Hispanic Coalition selected LPRAC Chairman Diaz to be the 2013 Puerto Rican Mayor of the Day. He will be honored on Friday, July 26, 2013 at 10:00 a.m. at the Waterbury City Hall with a flag raising ceremony followed by a dinner and dance at La Bella Vista Club. Mr. Lopez also informed LPRAC that the Hispanic Coalition is celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> year anniversary and invited everyone to attend. Mr. Lopez also asked LPRAC to help Latino non-profits and then asked if LPRAC keeps an eye out for all these Latino agencies.

**Mr. Oyanadel** said that all of the Latino Non-Profits are independently run by their Board of Directors. LPRAC does not have the ability to interfere or control what they are independently doing to respond to their independent mission statements. Mr. Oyanadel stated that the Connecticut Association for United Spanish Action (CAUSA) is a membership organization of several Latino community service agencies which is dedicated to enhancing the wellbeing of the Latino community through the work of its member agencies. For the past three fiscal years CAUSA, Senator Ayala, and LPRAC have successfully advocated for these agencies to make sure they receive a fair portion of state funding to help its member agencies keep current support and/or to secure new resources.

**Commissioner Salorio** came in at 5:41 p.m.

**Motion made to suspend meeting by Commissioner Montalvo and seconded by Commissioner Fernandez.**  
**Motion carries as follows:**

**5 Yeas: Commissioners Castillo, Castro, Fernández, Montalvo and Rodríguez-Reyes**

**5 Absent: Commissioners Arroyo, Cruz, Mañjon, Salorio and Torres**

**Luz Ozuba, Legislative Assistant to State Representative Robert Sanchez** testified before LPRAC that Rep. Sanchez had successfully worked with other lawmakers amending House Bill #6384 "An Act Concerning English Language Learners" in a way that it will strengthen the bill and most importantly eliminates the fiscal note so that it will not die and move forward through the legislative process.

**Motion made to return to regular order of meeting by Commissioner Fernandez and seconded by Commissioner Castillo.** Motion carries as follows:

**5 Yeas: Commissioners Castillo, Castro, Fernández, Montalvo and Rodríguez-Reyes**

**5 Absent: Commissioners Arroyo, Cruz, Mañjon, Salorio and Torres**

Commissioners Castro and Rodríguez-Reyes called in at 5:45 p.m. They were trying to call in since 5:30 p.m. but the meeting was not set-up to receive calls.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion made to approve the minutes of March 20, 2013 by Commissioner Castro and seconded by Commissioner Montalvo. Motion carries as follows:

**5 Yeas: Commissioners Castillo, Castro, Fernández, Montalvo and Rodríguez-Reyes**

**5 Absent: Commissioners Arroyo, Cruz, Mañjon, Salorio and Torres**

#### **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

Chairman Díaz, Esq. reported on the following items:

1. Earlier today, he and Mr. Oyanadel met with Senator Kane regarding questions that he had for our agency in reference to immigration reform.
2. Several LPRAC Commissioners, staff and consultants from the State Department of Education have been working during the past few weeks on ways to help fix a problem with HB 6384 "An Act Concerning English Language Learners" that Commissioner Fernandez testified in support earlier this year. Thanks to the efforts of State Representatives Bobby Sanchez and Andy Fleishman and legislative staff we are just hearing that the problem has been or will be fixed shortly.

Motion made to accept Chairperson's report by Commissioner Castillo and seconded by Commissioner Montalvo. Motion carries as follows:

**7 Yeas: Commissioners Castillo, Castro, Fernández, Montalvo, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio and Torres**

**3 Absent: Commissioners Arroyo, Cruz and Mañjon**

#### **ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Oyanadel provided a written report on the activities that he has been working on behalf of LPRAC as follows:

- On March 26 I attended an event about small businesses in Connecticut at the invitation of John Dankosky host of the radio program "Where We Live." I was able to exchange business cards with several individuals that I wanted to invite to our agency's "Turn the Curve" Session on Small Businesses scheduled for April 24<sup>th</sup>;
- On March 26<sup>th</sup> I attended a successful meeting with several representatives from Verizon Wireless to discuss their on-going monetary commitment to our agency's scholarship program – Verizon Wireless will provide LPRAC a total of \$10,000 in 2013 for our scholarship program;
- On March 27<sup>th</sup> I attended a meeting at the Legislative Office Building at the invitation of State Senator Andres Ayala to discuss the state commitment to Latino non-profits. The outcome of the meeting was to coordinate a press conference to highlight the need for the State to (1) maintain intact the line item for Hispanic Human Development; (2) provide full funding to these agencies which cannot endure additional cuts; & (3) most importantly to reallocate additional funding from the overall social services department to reflect the significant increase in demand within the population serviced by this HHD/HRD accounts. – This agencies are targeted for an appropriation reduction of \$42,000.00 according to the Governor's recommendation for the upcoming biennial;
- On March 28<sup>th</sup> I attended the historic Swearing-In Ceremony of Judge Carmen E. Espinosa to the Connecticut Supreme Court;
- On April 3<sup>rd</sup> I spoke at the press conference coordinated between LPRAC and Senator Ayala's Office regarding the Latino Non-Profits;
- On April 3<sup>rd</sup> at the invitation of State Representative Juan Candelaria I spoke at a rally at the State Capitol in support of legislation that would provide driver' licenses to Hispanic undocumented immigrants in Connecticut;
- On April 8<sup>th</sup> I met with Mr. Richard H. Strauss, Executive Director of the Connecticut Academy of Science & Engineering (CASE) about their current work preparing a disparity study which by their own admission does not have access to the information necessary to complete the study in within the time frame stipulated by state law. As you know LPRAC has been waiting for the findings of this disparity report so that equitable goals can be set in state statute to improve access to state contracts to both women-owned businesses and businesses owned by members of racial and ethnic minorities. I request that LPRAC sends a letter to the Appropriations Committee urging them to address this issue either by responding to CASE's requests to create a unified database with access to sub-contractor information among other recommendations or to mandate that the report is conducted by an organization that can truly conduct a thorough disparity study within the time frame requested by the Connecticut General Assembly;
- The RBA Committee of LPRAC met at 5:30 PM on Wednesday, April 10, 2013 in room 2600 of the Legislative Office Building (LOB) to discuss the RBA "Turn the Curve" Session on Latino Businesses currently planned for Wednesday, April 24, 2013 at 10:00 am in room 1C of the LOB. The objective of the meeting was to come to an agreement on the indicators that we shall examine at the event of April 24. The indicators selected for further research are: (1) The number of Hispanic businesses receiving loans in Connecticut from FY 2007 to today; (2) the dollar amount of loans to Hispanic businesses from FY 2007 through today; (3) the percentage of businesses that are Latino compared with incidence of Latinos in population (18 - 64) disaggregate by type of the dollar amount of state contracts for Latino companies compared with total contract dollars for UConn Construction contracts - % prequalified, % certified and percent of sub-contractors that received loans. Commissioner Montalvo, Fernandez, Salorio, Castillo, & Torres were present alongside with researchers from CT Economic Resource Center, SBA, Voices for Children, & the Charter Oak Group; The Committee already mailed out 60 invitations to different stakeholders and thus far we have received 32 positive confirmations from Contracts that have been awarded to Latino companies compared with the incidence in population (18-64); &

business and by industry; (4) the percentage of State Contracts (5) individuals agreeing to attend. Finally, we have confirmed that Former Commissioner Ed Rodriguez agreed to be the Keynote Speaker and Ron Schack will moderate the event. We ask that if any LPRAC commissioner would like to attend to this event to let us know in order to prepare accordingly;

- On Friday April 12<sup>th</sup>, at invitation of Lourdes Montalvo in her capacity as Constituent Services Director for the Secretary of the State, I met with her and a representative from the Identidad Latina Newspaper at the Office of the Secretary of the State to discuss the possibility of organizing a meeting on civic engagement and other Latino stakeholders with the Secretary of the State. We shall meet shortly in the next few weeks to continue vetting this issue further and decide who shall be invited and what the agenda will be for this event;
- On Monday, April 15<sup>th</sup> I met with State Senator Linares to discuss areas of commonality between our two offices and agreed to have a follow up in the near future. We discussed the public safety benefits of providing access to driver's licenses to immigrants and the need to increase our advocacy for Latino businesses in our state. Sen. Linares agreed to join us at the RBA on Businesses scheduled for April 24;
- The Public Information Committee worked diligently during the interim preparing an Op Ed piece entitled "Latino Commission Serves Vital Purpose" which was successfully published by the Hartford Courant on Monday April 1. The Committee also worked with the office of Senator Andres Ayala putting together the press conference in support of Latino non-profits of April 3<sup>rd</sup>;
- The Priorities and Legislation Committee continues to track different proposals prioritized by the Commission this year as follows:
  - HB 6384 "An Act Concerning English Language Learners" – a bill that would ensure that English Language Learners are not disproportionately and inappropriately identified as requiring special education due to reading deficiencies was favorably approved by the Education Committee and filed with a new number at the House of Representatives. However, while all the members of Education voted in favor of it regardless of political affiliation we just found out that the Office of Fiscal Analysis estimates that the bill will result in an estimated cost of \$1.6 million, in FY 14, to local and regional school districts (statewide) and a cost of approximately \$10,000 to the State Department of Education (SDE) in FY 14, associated with identifying students whose primary language is not English, as requiring special education services due to a reading deficiency – a detrimental cost analysis which will probably kill the bill if we don't find a way to demonstrate the benefits of moving forward or remind them that it is state and federal requirement that these services are provided to English Language learners. Chairman Diaz and Commissioner Fernandez are currently conducting research on this topic in order to send the Appropriations Co-Chairs an email with our concerns;
  - Raised S.B. No 1002 "An Act Concerning Community Schools" – a bill, if adopted by the legislature, would establish a full service community schools in alliance districts with the goal of bringing together community partners to provide important student and family services at such public schools was filed for a vote in the senate after it received a favorable report by the Education Committee on April 11 of this year;
  - Raised H.B. No 6485 "An Act Concerning A Barbershop Apprenticeship Program" This bill would allow the establishment of a new barbershop apprenticeship program and I am happy to report that it received almost full bipartisan support in the Public Health Committee. The bill was referred to the Labor and Public Employees Committee today and the office of fiscal analysis stated that the bill will require the Connecticut State Apprenticeship Council to study the feasibility of establishing an apprenticeship barbershop program within the Labor Department, has no fiscal impact. It is anticipated that the Council possesses the capability to conduct this study;
  - Proposed H.B. No. 6037 "An Act Concerning the Issuance of a Motor Vehicle Operator's License to Certain Immigrants," This bill is currently dead but State Representative Juan Candelaria stated earlier this year that he is planning to revive it in the next few weeks; Rep. Brendan Sharkey, the Speaker of the House is already on the record stating that he supports this bill and State Senator Looney, the Senate Majority Leader is one of their main co-sponsors in the senate. Senator Art Linares is also weighing in all the pros and cons of the bill and will determine his support of the bill in the next few weeks. He is currently concerned about people thinking they are allowed to vote by having a driver's license;
  - Governor's H.B. No 6354, "An Act Implementing the Governor's Budget Recommendations Concerning General Government" a segment of this bill includes the language which would merge LPRAC alongside with other legislative Commissions and eliminate the Commission on Aging. The Appropriations Committee is studying all the information received from the general public and our agency regarding this matter and they are expected to release their proposal within the next few weeks.

**Motion made to approve Acting Executive Director's report by Commissioner Castillo and seconded by Commissioner Fernandez. Motion carries as follows:**

**7 Yeas: Commissioners Castillo, Castro, Fernández, Montalvo, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio and Torres**  
**3 Absent: Commissioners Arroyo, Cruz and Mañón**

#### **PUBLIC INFORMATION/TALENT BANK COMMITTEE REPORT**

Commissioner Rodríguez-Reyes reported on the following:

1. Said that the members of the committee have been working on the OP-ED piece entitled "Latino Commission Serves Vital Purpose" which was successfully published by the Hartford Courant on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013; also,
2. The Committee worked with the office of Senator Ayala working on the Press Conference in support of the Latino Non-Profits on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2013;
3. Now we are working on our next newsletter so if anyone has any information, please let them know;
4. She will be participating at the Latino Expo and will be giving out the scholarship applications and she is wondering if there is an increase in scholarship being submitted as they have also put it on Twitter and Facebook in La Voz Hispana.

**Motion made to approve the Public Information/Talent Bank Committee Report made by Commissioner Montalvo and seconded by Commissioner Arroyo. Motion carries as follows:**

**7 Yeas: Commissioners Castillo, Castro, Fernández, Montalvo, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio and Torres**

**3 Absent: Commissioners Arroyo, Cruz and Mañjon**

#### **PRIORITIES & LEGISLATION COMMITTEE REPORT**

As Commissioner Cruz, Chair for this committee is on vacation, the report was tabled

#### **Tape 1 B**

#### **SPECIAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE REPORT**

Commissioner Torres, Chair for this committee said that they met on Wed., April 10, 2013 & reported as follows:

1. The Keynote Speaker for the Tribute to Hispanic Veterans is Judge Carmen Espinosa and the Mistress of Ceremonies is Master Sergeant Annie Ortíz;
2. They are working on a new vendor as they had problems with the last caterer and they are looking at Maneely's in Windsor, CT;
3. He is working on the distribution of 100 gun locks that he has and wants to have LPRAC involved and
4. The 65<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment has asked us to get involved in their trying to do a resolution. The Caucus is having a meeting on May 8, 2013 at the LOB at 4:00 p.m. and we would like to see if we can get on board on this program. This has to do with the Borinqueneers.

**Motion made to approve the Special Projects Committee report by Commissioner Fernandez and seconded by Commissioners Castillo and Montalvo.**

#### **Discussion:**

Chairman Díaz, Esq. asked what they want us to do exactly.

Commissioner Torres said that they received a memo from Noemi Figueroa and they have given out awards, the Congressional Gold Medal (CGM) to some of these groups, i.e., the Navajo Code Talkers, Japanese-American Nisei & African-American. The 65<sup>th</sup> Borinqueneers want to be added to this list. There's a procedure that they have to go through.

Mr. Oyanadel wants to commend the committee on their fundraising efforts. He looked at the report provided by Lucia Goicoechea-Hernandez and it said that on item #2 in the fundraising section, LPRAC now has \$28,572 in the scholarship account and it will grow to \$44,000 once we receive the \$10,000 commitment from VerizonWireless, \$1,500 from the 4Cs, \$2,500 from CHFA and a tentative \$1,700 from CRT. The total projected expenditures for the awards is \$43,643.60 so we're \$628 over the projected expenditures and are able to cover costs for this year's awards.

**Motion carries as follows:**

**7 Yeas: Commissioners Castillo, Castro, Fernández, Montalvo, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio and Torres**

**3 Absent: Commissioners Arroyo, Cruz and Mañjon**

#### **RBA COMMITTEE**

Commissioner Montalvo, Co-Chair of this Committee reported that she made some phone calls and an additional 11 people and other community people will be attending the RBA Turn the Curve Session on Small Businesses. She also spoke to Dr. Ileana Rojas from UCONN. She is very interested in small businesses; please send information to her as she can share some good statistics with us. We met with her this past weekend; she's from the Spanish Department at UCONN.

Commissioner Fernández spoke of the meeting in Willimantic that they went on Saturday that was done by Pastor Daryn Ortíz who wants to start community outreaches and community programing out of Windham and Willimantic as a whole. Dr. Rojas and her husband attended too. They had some interesting comments not only on education pieces but on minority businesses and Dr. Salorio had brought up prior on the SBA development center at UCONN will run again.

**Motion made to accept the RBA report made by Commissioners Castillo and Montalvo, and seconded by Commissioner Dr. Salorio.**

**Discussion:**

**Mr. Oyanadel** explained that once we look at the statistics, the indicators and the trends, and issues we are going to target, i.e., access to credit, access to contracts and the amount of businesses that we have, and we look at just these three items, what we can certainly move forward with our “turn the curve” session with all the stakeholders at the table that have already been invited.

**Commissioner Montalvo** announced an idea for a huge fundraiser for SAMA and LPRAC. Many years ago, the Secretary of the State’s office used to hold what is called a Small Minority Business Showcases. We may not be able to do the same magnitude but they used to bring back to the office \$7,000,000 with this. She will be very happy to share this and sit down with Julio Mendoza, Executive Director of SAMA and any other board member of SAMA.

**Motion carries as follows:**

**7 Yeas: Commissioners Castillo, Castro, Fernández, Montalvo, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio and Torres**

**3 Absent: Commissioners Arroyo, Cruz and Mañjon**

**AD-HOC COMMITTEE ON CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

As Commissioner Arroyo, Chairman of this Ad-Hoc Committee was absent, report was tabled.

**OLD AND NEW BUSINESS**

**Motion to authorize the Special Projects Committee to work in collaboration with the Borinqueneers made by Commissioner Castillo and seconded by Commissioner Dr. Salorio. Motion carries as follows:**

**7 Yeas: Commissioners Castillo, Castro, Fernández, Montalvo, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio and Torres**

**3 Absent: Commissioners Arroyo, Cruz and Mañjon**

**Motion made to have second remote meeting in Danbury, CT made by Commissioner Fernandez and seconded by Commissioner Montalvo. Motion carries as follows:**

**7 Yeas: Commissioners Castillo, Castro, Fernández, Montalvo, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio and Torres**

**3 Absent: Commissioners Arroyo, Cruz and Mañjon**

**Commissioner Montalvo** announced that the Commission meeting in May will be held in Willimantic, CT at 120 Union Street. There will be signs and you go into the building from the back. This was approved at our commission meeting in April 2013.

**Tape 2 A**

**Chairman Díaz, Esq.** announced that we need more aggressive membership in the Priorities and Legislation Committee. All of last year, he says that approximately 80% of the meetings were attended by a few Commissioners and staff. We can do the policy work; we have the infrastructure through the Priorities and Legislation Committee but we need greater input. He also recommended that LPRAC makes it a priority to request that legislative leaders increase their appointments to the board.

**Commissioner Rodríguez-Reyes** said that the only way to get more commissioners on is to go to our appointing authorities and ask them for a favor, and that person has to be a constituent of theirs and is also a friend.

**Commissioner Montalvo** asked to speak as the Director of Constituent Service in Community Outreach for the Secretary of the State’s Office. She and the Secretary of the State are doing information conversations, talking about civic engagement and empowerment to communities throughout the state. She requested that LPRAC be included. Next time we meet, she would like to include anyone who would like to participate in this conversation to please tell Mr. Oyanadel. We had a meeting in Waterbury and had a large group and they asked if we can provide civics one-on-one. She is hoping to set this up for the month of September where they can hold a big meeting at the State Capitol. She will find out further information and let everyone know.

**Commissioner Castillo** said that we added an Ad-Hoc Committee on Civic Engagement and Commissioner Arroyo is the Chair for this committee and he and whoever else is on the committee can work with you on this subject.

**Motion made to adjourn at 7:17 p.m. by Commissioner Castillo and seconded by Commissioner Dr. Salorio. Motion approved as follows:**

**7 Yeas: Commissioners Castillo, Castro, Fernández, Montalvo, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio and Torres**

**3 Absent: Commissioners Arroyo, Cruz and Mañjon**

Respectfully submitted by,

Yolanda Castillo, Secretary  
LPRAC Board

YC:cjc